THE PASTIME.

No. 7.

Saturday, April 4, 1807.

Original Papers.

FOR THE PASTIME.

AMERICAN SCENERY.

WHY should American travellers expatiate with so much enthusiasm on the sublime and picturesque beauties of Switzerland, Scotland, and the confines of Germany, while their own country can boast of more attractive scenery, with which they are totally unacquainted? What is more sublime than the Highlands of the North River: what more awfully tremendous than the cataract of Niagara: what more romantic than the vale of Lebanon: what can surpass the solemn and majestic gloom of the distant mountains, the pensive and soothing silence of the groves, the pastoral simplicity of the cottagers, or the wild luxuriancy of the meadows?

I am not one of those who decry every thing that is American. I love my country, and I delight to contemplate that noble spirit of perseverance which has enabled the laborious husbandman to climb the loftiest mountains, and to change the rude garb of nature for the rich habiliments of cultivation. I have often gazed with delight upon the verdant hills rising amphitheatrically around me; I have often contemplated the progressive influence of the departing sun on the distant mountains, or the bright orb of day rising in the pride of his splendor, gilding them with his ruddy light, and chasing the fogs, fantastically formed, from their lofty tops. These are scenes which we have no need of going to Europe to behold. To extend the allusion, in the words of that eminent poet, Mr. Paine, of Boston:

> What tho' no wave Pactolian laves her shore,
> Nor gleam her caverns with Peruvian ore;
> Yet she has MINES, which need no *rod* to trace—
> Search not her *bosom*, but survey her *face*.
>
> Beneath the shade, which freedom's oak displays,
> Their votive shrine APOLLO's offspring raise.
> With youthful fancy, or with matron taste
> They cull the meadow, or explore the waste;
> Each tract, they culture, verdant life perfumes,
> With *judgment* ripens, or with *genius* blooms.
>
> In strength of scene, delights a Ramsay's page;
> With classic truth, a Belknap charms the age.

In cloudless splendor, modest Minot shines,
And Bunker flames in Allen's glowing lines.

By sister arts, and kindred powers allied,
The Trumbull's rise, the lyre's and pencil's pride;
And ev'ry muse has carv'd Philenia's* name,
On ev'ry laurel in the grove of fame.

[*Poem on the Invention of Letters, p.* 11.]

Our correspondent has happily imitated the style of that popular work, the Miseries of Human Life.

FOR THE PASTIME.

PLAGUES OF A COLLEGE LIFE.

WAKED in a bleak morning by the bell for prayers, and just as you get out of bed, hearing the last stroke, to slip on your coat and shoes, and thus clad, to be detained, shivering in the cold chapel, half an hour beyond the usual time, by an admonitory harrangue on some lately detected "scrape:" or,

Being indisposed, to rise in a chilly morning and having no fire, on procuring wood from the pile, to find it so completely soaked that the coals, instead of making it burn, but encrease the evil, by thawing the ice which cleaves to the sticks, filling your room with smoke, and covering your hearth with water.

At the usual time for reading off fines, to have keen satires in their stead, no names being mentioned, on some folly which you never dreamt of being found out: and then feeling application, to be compelled to laugh louder than any other student, to prevent your phiz from betraying a sense of guilt to those around you.

To be out of money, and after writing home for supplies, to receive a dozen letters, but none of them with inclosures, and, after two or three weeks, inquiring the cause, to learn that the letter miscarried, and never came to hand! or,

After selling a valued trifle at half its worth, (cash very scarce) to raise money immediately to pay postage for a *treble* letter which you are told lies in the post-office, expecting to find money, to open it with avidity, and lo! it is an importunate dunning letter with a yard-long bill, which you see no prospect of being able to pay!

In a state nearly approaching to starvation, to hear the last bell for evening study, just as you have begun an excellent supper at William's, and running thro' mud up to your knees to get to college, losing your shoe in your hurry, and to be, after all your trouble, fined for tardiness at your room.

To be compelled, by a sudden loss of recollection, after taking great pains with an oration for public exhibition, just at the climax of some outrageous passion——to make your bow and go off.

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* *The signature of Mrs.* MORTON, *the American Sappho.*

To be compelled to bear "the oppressor's wrong, the proud 'boy's' contumely," because you are not big enough to flog him for his impertinence.

To see a person rusticated, during a long vacation, for a frolic in which you have taken a conspicuous part, and at the time of the sentence being read, to hear it followed by, "the Faculty have the punishment of the others concerned under consideration, but they have not yet decided their fate." How awful the terrifying anticipation—how dreadful the relinquishment of a thousand darling schemes of pleasure, more than you had ever formed for any holidays before!

Omnium rerum, heus, vexatio est!

PETER PLAINTIVE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE PASTIME.

ALLOW me to ask, Mr. Editor, thro' the medium of your paper, whether the practice of distinguishing the merit of students by their standing in their classes, is not better calculated to stimulate to application, than that of arranging them in alphabetical order, without regard to precedence of talent? The first of these is the practice of European Universities, and can any of your readers tell me why it should be discarded here? *A. B.*

FOR THE PASTIME.

Mr. EDITOR—Allow me to request that you will republish the following, from the Literary Magazine for 1804:

"Early in life, Hamilton discovered a brilliant fancy, and correct taste. He wrote and delivered, at the request of his fellow students, an essay on duelling, which, even at that season of heated imagination, declared his detestation of that savage practice. He pronounced, several years ago, an eulogium on the character of Gen. Greene. We hope that both these productions may be discovered among his papers, and that these, in connection with his many political tracts, will be published in a uniform manner. During a year or more before his death, he meditated a work on government; but we are not informed that he had made any progress in such a great and desirable undertaking."

I have been informed that Gen. H. contemplated a work on the scriptures, but cannot vouch for the accuracy of the information. At a trial in New-York, on a question for rejecting the testimony of a Jew, supposing, from their having renounced the Christian religion, that they would not acknowledge the responsibility of an oath, he is said to have displayed an astonishing profundity of theological information. Can any of your correspondents throw light upon this subject? *PERCONTATOR.*

FOR THE PASTIME.

Mr. EDITOR—I perceive in the Anthology for December last, the Editors assert that "fifty years ago, there was not a Maga-

zine in Great Britain, which could stand a competition with their Anthology, however superior such works may be at present." If I do not mistake, the Gentleman's Megazine was, fifty years ago, at the heighth of its celebrity: and, about that period, under the particular care of the great Dr. Johnson. I respect the Anthology, and its Editors, but they have so many encomiasts abroad, that it seems needless to praise themselves. And, even allowing this to be strictly correct, "*I hold it not meet to have it* THUS *set down.*"

MODESTUS.

Biography.

LIFE OF DERMODY.

[Continued.]

While superintending the glue, oil, and colour pots in the painting room, Mr. Cherry, an actor of eminence now on the boards of Drury-lane, with great rapture brought into the green room a poem written, as he said, by a most surprizing boy, then in the house. The subject of this poem was a sarcastic comparison between the patentee of the Theatre Royal, and the manager of the Equestrian Theatre, in which the feats of the latter were humorously and wittily enlarged upon. Cherry's description of the boy, together with the merit of the composition, excited their curiosity to the highest pitch; and, led on by Mr. C. they rushed in a body to the place where the painter and his wonderful attendant were at work. If their astonishment was excited on hearing the poem read, it was increased tenfold at the sight of the author. Infantine in appearance, and clad in the very garb of wretchedness, with a meagre, half starved, but intelligent countenance; a coat much too large for him, and his shoulders and arms seen naked through it; without waistcoat, shirt, or stockings; with a pair of breeches made for a full grown person, soiled and ragged, reaching to his ancles; his uncovered toes thrust through a pair of old slippers without heels, almost of the magnitude of Kamskatka snow-shoes; his hair clotted with glue, and his face and almost naked body smeered and disfigured with paint of different colors, black, blue, red, green, and yellow;—thus in amazement stood before them, with a small pot of size in one hand, and a hair brush in the other, the translator of Horace, Virgil, and Anacreon. Each of the performers felt a sympathetic glow of tenderness for the wretched boy, and seemed anxious to administer to his necessities. As soon as Dermody recovered from the agitation into which the eager curiosity of the performers had thrown him, he answered their questions with a modesty and clearness, that attached them still closer to his interest. Among the number was Mr. Owenson, a gentleman conspicuous for his domestic attachments, and distinguished by his humanity. Mr. O. in particular, struck with his unaffected simplicity and apparent wretchedness, invited him to his house; and after gathering from the painter all the information he could give, presented his address, and desired the favor of his company in half an hour. He immediately left the theatre, and with the poem which Mr. Cherry had presented to him in his hand, went to prepare his family for the boy's reception. At the appointed time, Dermody appeared. The description which Mrs. Owenson had received of him from her husband, excited her warmest compassion, and being a lady of extreme feeling and sensibility, on seeing a child so forlorn and destitute before her, she burst into a flood of tears, clasped him in her arms, and gave vent to the noblest feelings of humanity.

Mr. Owenson, with a generous anxiety to cultivate a mind so wonderful, and so promising, went the next morning with Dermody, (still in rags) to present him to the celebrated Dr. Young, a distant relation of his, and at that time professor of natural philosophy in the University. Dr. Y., interested by his story, and astonished by his talents, readily consented to superintend his studies, in order to fit him for college; and, for this purpose, Dermody was to attend him three days in each week.* To excite a general interest for his little prize, Mr. O. took him, in his tatter'd suit, to the most distinguished characters in Dublin; and afterwards, fitted up an apartment for him in his own house, stripped him of his rags, made him the companion of his children, and treated him with the endearing affection of a father. But it seems that the course of studies prescribed was far from according with his genius or inclination, and he soon siezed his opportunities to escape from what he called scholastic drudgery, passing his time in playing with his adopted sisters, or in writing sonnets on domestic incidents familiar to them. At length he absented himself entirely. This conduct, when discovered by Mr. O. and Dr. Y. occasioned them much uneasiness; the latter, in particular, seemed to regard it as indicative of a depravity of heart. His duplicity, in this instance, was too conspicuous to pass without notice, and Mr. Owenson pointed out to him in an impressive manner, the fatal consequences that would result from conduct founded on principles so opposite to propriety, and to the moral precepts that link men together in society. Dermody acknowledged his error, which he attributed to a predeliction for a different course of study. He was forgiven.

In order more effectually to tie him to his studies, Mr. Owenson determined to place him at the academy of Mr. Austin, a clergyman of distinguished worth and learning, who at that time kept a school of great repute in Dublin. Finding after some little time, that many inconveniences, on account of the distance, resulted from his continuing to eat and lodge at the house of his benefactor, Mr. Austin volunteered his services, and at length, took him to his house, and introduced him to his friends: by whose advice, he opened a subscription for his education and support, which was liberally patronized. This new scene of life delighted Dermody, and as it at once released him from the weight of dependence, and the miseries of poverty, it was of all others the best calculated to reform his errors: and had proper measures been pursued, we cannot but believe that they would have been attended with the happiest effect. His rapid progress, and dignified emulation, were objects of satisfaction to his friends, and the richest promise to himself: and, to give a still stronger excitement to his exertions, Mr. Austin selected and published, at his own expence, a small collection of his poems.

It would seem that his better star had now the ascendant, did he but know how to estimate the value of his situation, and to make a good use of the advantages thus fortunately thrown in his way. His days, for a considerable time, were thus spent in the happiest manner, and his evenings generally devoted to the circles of taste and fashion; for it became the rage of the day, to have "the little poet" at all the parties of any style or consequence. It may be easily conceived, that under his peculiar circumstances, the subscription which had been opened, would be most liberally patronized. At one time, Mr. Austin placed £150 sterling in the Bank, to be portioned out at his discretion, for the support and education of his poetical ward: and this

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* *On Dr. Young's presenting Dermody, besides other books prescribed for college study, with a Murray's Logic—"Sir," observed he, with a downcast look, "I think I should not like this; for any man of common sense, and little knowledge, can quibble, without studying to quibble." Perhaps his remark had something more than sprightliness in it. The Doctor, on hearing it, burst into a hearty laugh.*

enabled him to remove Dermody to a comfortable and commodious house, contiguous to the academy, where he might be accommodated more agreeably to himself. Seduced by the example of his father, into the habit of associating with despicable and vicious society, Dermody found his present situation better adapted to the gratification of that propensity, than when under the immediate direction of Mr. Austin. His reverend preceptor soon learnt, with heartfelt mortification, that his protege frequently slighted the invitations of the great, who thus early courted his society, to mingle with sots, and to revel in the ale house. At a meeting of this kind, it was his misfortune to get acquainted with a low bred man by the name of Martin, professionably a drawing master. Martin, knowing Dermody's influence with Mr. Austin, and wishing to get the business of the academy, persuaded him, in an unguarded moment, to show that gentleman a drawing, which he (Dermody) should say was done by himself after receiving only three lessons. In his ardor to serve his companion, he forgot the consequences of detection; and when he produced the picture, and forcibly urged his recommendation, Mr. Austin instantly accused him of duplicity. Dermody boldly repelled the charge. He was soothed, threatened, and flattered, but in vain. At last, however, he was desired to sit down and make a copy of the drawing: he hesitated, began, hesitated, trembled, and finished it; when, to his disgrace, the deception was evident. To punish him was absolutely necessary: and he was ordered from the parlor to the kitchen, where, for a considerable time, he was kept under disgrace, exposed to the sneers and insults of any envious, unfriendly schoolmate, who felt disposed to take advantage of his situation: these, however, were not so numerous as might be supposed. His companions would often steal to the kitchen, to cheer him in his exile: but no attention could sweeten the bitterness of his punishment; and at length, seeing no prospect of being released from his confinement, in a paroxism of resentment, he wrote four lines in which the families of his patron and patroness, were severely and humorously satirized. These were not intended for publication, nor was it intended that they should be seen. They were consequently, when his anger cooled, thrown carelessly among many others, in a corner of the room: but here they were unfortunately discovered by his prying landlord, a violent methodist, who took this opportunity to revenge himself on Dermody, for passing some unlucky jokes, on his intemperate zeal in trying to convert him. The lines were carried, in savage triumph, to Mr. Austin; who, conceiving that he merited a different return for his kindness, in the heat of passion, of unjustifiable passion, destroyed a volume of poems which he had collected for publication, returned to the subscribers the whole of the money he had collected for the boy's support and education, shut his doors upon him, and turned him once more upon the world, friendless and forsaken.

[*To be continued.*]

Variety.

..... "STEALING, and GIVING SWEETS."

It is a singular circumstance that an act allowing dancing, &c. on the Sabbath, should have passed in the reign of Charles I, who, his greatest enemies must allow, had at least every exterior of religion; and that an act for keeping holy the same day, should be passed in the reign of Charles II. who, his best friends must acknowledge, had no more religion, nor regard to its forms, than one of his own coach horses.

Circulating Libraries, now so general and so useful, are of no longer standing than fifty or sixty years. The first in London was commenced by one Wright, a book-seller, about the year 1740. The number in Great Britain was, in 1800, not less than one thousand.

Indexes, one would imagine, would have no use but to direct readers to any passage they may wish to refer to; yet, in law books, which should at least be *clear*, some curious references are found, which might justify a plain, unlettered man in suspecting the writer of the volume, and the writer of the index, were playing at cross purposes. For example, in Hawkins' Pleas of the Crown, we find, under the article *Pick-Pocket*, vide *Clergy—Prisoner*, vide *Gaoler*, and fifty others equally allusive. Query, do these come under the description of law-fictions, or do they arise from the glorious uncertainty of the law?

Princes, says Scavedra, have no superiors but God and Fame, who alone, by fear of punishment, can awe them to act honorably. Hence they often dread historians more than enemies: like Belshazzar, who could feast while the foe was besieging; but when he saw the hand begin to write, his countenance changed, and the joints of his loins were loosed.

The following striking coincidence between Shakspeare, and an ancient writer, has been overlooked by the commentators. In Lucan's Tragopodagra, the goddess Podagra, being braved by a couple of nostrum mongers, challenges them to a trial of powers, breaking out in the following invocation:

"Hither, ye Torments, ministers of my fury, assemble from all parts. You, fire the bottoms of the feet to the toe ends—you, sieze upon the ancles—you, infuse your sharp venom from the thighs to the middle of the knees—you, twist all the fingers."

The Torments answer, "See, we have obeyed your commands: the wretches lie miserably howling, tortured in all their limbs by our embraces!"

Original Poetry.

The second of the lately discovered Odes of Horace, is one of those which read much better in the original Latin, than in English. For this cause, we decline translating it ourselves. If any of our correspondents can supercede this difficulty, we shall be happy to acknowledge their aid.

Ad Librum suum.

Dulci Libello nemo sodalium
Forsan meorum charior extitit
De te merenti quid, fidelis,
Officium domino rependis?
Te Roma cautum territat ardua?
Depone vanos invidiæ metus;
Urbisque, fidens dignitati,
Per plateas animosus *audi.
En quo furentes Eumenidum choros
Disjecit almo fulmine Jupiter!
Huic ara stabit; fama cantu
Perpetuo celebranda crescet.

*audi] *Potius aude.*

FOR THE PASTIME.

FANCY.

As the pure chrystalline stream
Darting bright the sunny beam,
Gliding by the willow's shade
Dancing through the verdant glade,
Ev'ry prospect brightens ;

So blithe Fancy, nature's child,
Roving now thro' woodlands wild,
Wand'ring now o'er Flora's charms,
Rev'ling now in Beauty's arms,
Ev'ry pleasure heightens.—*S.*

FOR THE PASTIME.

THE BLUSH.

Oft, on the silver ev'ning cloud
The sun's last radiance lies,
Or lightly flashing on its breast,
Vermillions it, and dies.

So, on her angel face the blush,
Its glowing crimson spread,
And leaving there its richest tints,
With fond reluctance fled. *H.*

Albany, March 27.

TO READERS AND CORRESPONDENTS.

While with many thanks we acknowledge the polished favor of our Albany correspondent, we cannot but relate the sublime sensations called forth by the word "paid" on the front of his letter. The veins of an Editor must be filled by *golden* blood, for without it he cannot exist ; and the little money sucking insects in the shape of post-office charges, if they do not utterly dry the fountains of Editorial life, at least, rob the healthy cheek of its roses. To drop the metaphor : after emptying our purse to pay for letters, eagerly breaking their seals in the hope of finding the sweet smile of friendship hidden within them, how have we been vexed to the soul, when the unmeaning stare of a long, rugged, barren essay, has opened its saucer eyes upon us, with, "For the Pastime," at the head of the first page. We entreat our correspondents, when they force us to pay duty for their communications, to take off the *double tax* of compelling us to plod thro' essays which Patience herself would cast, unread, into the flames. We are willing to pay for that which is worth our money ; but when we are quizzed by long winded nonsense weavers, there is no alternative. We cannot act like Peter Pindar's Jewess, who, her son having broken his neck in striving for the foremost seat in the play-house gallery, demanded of the manager :

"Gif me my shilling back you know,
"For Moses haf not see de show."

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